

## THE NATIONAL PARK SERVICE ANNOUNCES THE AVAILABILITY OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT FOR FLAMINGO WASTEWATER IMPROVEMENTS

The National Park Service (NPS) today announced the availability of the Environmental Assessment (EA) for the Flamingo Wastewater System Improvements within Everglades National Park. Two public workshops will be held on Monday, February 10, 2003. The first will be held from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. at the Flamingo Lodge inside the park. The second will be held from 5 p.m. to 7 p.m. at the Florida City Council Chambers, 404 West Palm Drive, Florida City, Florida. The public is encouraged to attend at any time during either of the two-hour meetings. The workshop format will include informal interaction, exhibits, and opportunities to make written and verbal comments. No presentations are scheduled. Park staff will be on hand to discuss the EA and answer questions.

The EA analyzes the environmental impacts associated with the proposed improvements, and addresses the National Park Service need to provide wastewater treatment services to this developed area. The present wastewater system does not consistently meet state standards. Two alternatives are discussed:

- 1) The no action alternative, which would maintain the status quo. The present wastewater system (including a treatment plant) would continue to operate, ever-increasing frequency of repair to the decaying system would continue as the system aged, and the system would not be able to meet future state standards; and,
- 2) The preferred alternative in which the NPS proposes the upgrading and modification of the existing plant, demolishing other portions that cannot be retained, and testing and replacing deteriorated portions of the wastewater collection system for the Flamingo District within Everglades National Park.

A copy of the EA is available on the Everglades National Park's web site at <http://www.nps.gov/ever/planning>. The NPS will accept comments through February 24, 2003. Comments may be sent to: EVER\_Flamingo\_WW@nps.gov or by mail to: Superintendent, Everglades National Park, 40001 S.R. 9336, Homestead, FL 33030, Attn: Elsa Alvear. Those who cannot access the web site may request a hard copy from the same address.

Please be aware that names and addresses of respondents may be released if requested under the Freedom of Information Act. Our practice is to make comments, including names and home addresses of respondents, available for public review during regular business hours. Individual respondents may request that we withhold their home address from the record, which we will honor to the extent allowable by law. There also may be circumstances in which we would withhold from the record a respondent's identity, as allowable by law. If you wish us to withhold your name

and/or address, you must state this prominently at the beginning of your comment. We will make all submissions from organizations, or businesses, and from individuals identifying themselves as representatives or officials of organizations or businesses, available for public inspection in their entirety. Anonymous comments may be included in the public record. However, the NPS is not legally required to consider or respond to anonymous comments.